Thoughts

JULIA A. DOOLITTLE

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THOUGHTS

BY

JULIA A. DOOLITTLE.

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WITH MANY HAPPY RECOLLECTIONS

THIS LITTLE VOLUME

IS DEDICATED, WITH AFFECTION AND RESPECT,

TO MY CLASSMATES OF THE YEAR '77,

AND OUR MOST ESTEEMED TEACHER,

PROF. J. M. CASSETY.

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The Bank of Life.

At the Bank of Life old Time doth sit,
  Cashier for many ages,
While his aged hand is steady and firm
  As he turns those marvellous pages—
Those pages that bear a record sure
Of lives so stained and lives so pure.

And multitudes come and multitudes go
  Out and in of the mighty portals,
To learn the fate and length of years
  That are granted unto mortals,
And Time looks over their checks with care,
And writes an accurate record there.

And many go to the bank, I fear,
  To draw from their store of years,
To find their account is overdrawn,
  And the pages blotted with tears—

Tears that the pitying angels wept
Over terrible records so truly kept.

Many that spend their years so free,
  That live many years in one,
And find themselves in debt to Time
  Ere life is scarce begun ;
Like Cleopatra's banquet-cup,
Dissolve life's treasures and drink them up.

Live months in a day, years in a week,
  In heedless, reckless pleasures,
Then are called to account by vigilant Time
  For wasting of costly treasures,
And find a debt they wantonly made,
A debt so great it cannot be paid.

And looking back o'er the wasted years,
  Find nothing their past to brighten :
Not a sunbeam they gathered nor gleam of
      love
  Their weary heart to lighten ;

Not a tender word spoken nor kindly deed,
As fruit of their sowing when greatest in need.

Then, ere we are called to the wicket of life,
Our record of time to be given,
Let us prayerfully strive to not o'erdraw
Our accounts in life or in heaven,
But use the years unto each assigned,
For ourselves and others as God designed.

One Woman's Love.

'Twas a lovely spot, built in the rocks
By nature's hand, and sheltered well
By bending boughs of giant trees,
Which close above in masses fell,
As though they loved to bend them there
To guard a place so wondrous fair.

Beneath, the sea with surging waves
Sought in its wrath this spot to gain,
But vainly dashed against the rocks,
Receding with a moan of pain,
While baffled, foaming masses spring
High up, and to the crevice cling.

A gentle maiden, sweet and fair,
Had found this spot in wanderings oft,
And strewed the rude and rocky seat
With clinging mosses, rich and soft,

And made it like a fairy bower,
In which she lingered many an hour.

Not of the beauty that is sought
  By worldlings was this maid possessed,
But with that better, womanlier grace,
  And shy, sweet ways, she still was blessed,
And naught on earth could fairer be
Than bower and maid 'neath sheltering tree.

And daily there she watched the sails
  That drifted out into the main,
And at the even turned their course
  Back to the rocky shores again ;
But one alone she ever sought,
For at the eve her love it brought.

And as the ship e'er neared the shore,
  She knew his loving eyes would seek
This rock-bound nook, and scan it o'er,
  And signal, though they could not speak ;
And when at last they reached the land,
To list his step upon the sand.

For to this spot he alway came,
  Knowing his welcome sure and true,
And 'neath the massive trees he told
  The story that is ever new,
And sealed with kisses warm the vows
'Midst giant cliffs and bending boughs.

One day he came to say good-by
  Ere he should sail for many a day,
And soothe her with the promise bright
  Of swift return, and smiling say,
"Then I will sail across the sea,
And bear my own away with me."

And there they parted full of hope,
  Yet with a dread they dare not speak—
He with a buoyant, happy smile,
  She with sad tears and whitened cheek—
And stood and watched him from the shore
Till gleam of sail was seen no more.

For many a day she sought the cliff,
  For many an hour she watched the sea,

Until the time had come at last
That his return for her should be,
And there with heart-beats wild and fast
She watched until the day had passed.

The day had passed, and night came on
With chilling mist ; she heeded not,
And still she stood and strained her eyes
For ship or sail : had he forgot ?
Had he forgot his waiting one ?
Ah ! no ; he'd come at rising sun.

He came not then ; and day by day
Went by ; and then the news at last—
The ship went down, with all on board,
'Midst darkness, in a raging blast ;
And yet the maiden still would say,
"It is not true : he'll come to-day."

Long, weary years, and yet the rock
She ever sought from morn till night,
Until the fair brown hair of youth
Had grown to be so strangely white ;

The bright eyes grown so dull and dim
Still scanned the sea in search of him.

Until one day, the fishers tell,
They found her there, alone and dead,
Upon the rocky seat whose sides
Long years ago with moss she spread,
And, watching there, life ebbed away
As ebbs the tide, from day to day.

And oft the fisher folk repeat
The wondrous tale, and whispering say,
She saw at last the ship's white sail
That came to bear her far away,
And with her lover the ship had cast
Its anchor 'neath fair skies at last.

Golden Links.

SLIPPING from out life's chain,
Each day e'enmost,
Filling our hearts with pain,
Some golden link is lost—
Some treasure that we loved
And thought our own,
Drifts silently away,
And leaves us so alone.

Some dear hand that we held
In tender friendship's ties,
By death's dread breath is felled,
And oh ! so quickly dies ;
The hand slips from our own
Into a stronger one,
The loving heart is stilled,
Its pain and sorrow done.

And then we miss them so,
The dear ones gone ;
For a little way adown life's path
We must walk alone ;
But in the after years
We feel that God knew best,
Their feet had grown so tired,
And needed rest.

There's many a golden link
Missing from out life's chain,
Many a dear, sweet face
Down to rest we've lain :
We do not call them lost,
But in the Shepherd's care ;
He cheers our aching hearts,
And bids us meet them there.

Not where our feet grow tired,
Or hearts feel pain,
But sheltered by His love,
We'll find our own again.

When God shall call us home,
Up through the mystic way,
We'll find the dear ones waiting
That we have lost to-day.

To Summer.

HERE is a health to thee, beautiful Summer,
Fair season of sunny skies ;
To thy gay tinted flowers
And verdant bowers,
And fields where thy soft kiss lies.

Great poets have sung of thee, Summer,
Thy lovers are legion, too,
And my pen, though weak,
Still ventures to seek
Some praise befitting to you.

I love thy roses, sweet Summer,
Fair roses that bloom to die ;
I love their sweet breath
While fading in death,
As the perfume sweepeth by.

I love thy blue skies, bright Summer,
Thy fields of nodding grain,
Thy clouds like a pout,
As the sun peereth out,
And turns to diminish the rain.

My heart fain longeth, Summer,
That thou shouldst "bide a wee,"
But the fading flowers
And swift flying hours
Foretell how soon thou wilt flee.

But methinks there are whisperings, Summer,
Through fields and blooming flowers,
Of a summer more fair
And a pleasure more rare
Than this transient season of ours.

The ripe golden grain foretells it
In rippling song to the wind,
And birds soaring high
Sing the glad reply,
In chorus so sweetly combined,

Of a summer that never departeth,
Of brightness our hearts ne'er guessed,
Of skies ever blue,
Where the faithful and true
Shall lay down life's burdens and rest.

Love's Prayer.

I CANNOT find in other words
The depth of love my heart affords
For you, my own ;
Their songs are sweet and fondly true,
But not with depth as I love you,
And you alone.

Grandeur and might are in their song,
But truth and tenderness belong
In my brief lay—
The truth that lasts while time shall be,
Across life's waves to eternity,
Through every day.

When sad my heart with its weary load,
Or tired my feet on the rugged road,
This is my plea :

Weary and faint there comes to mind
The comfort in the trust I find
Your love for me.

My hand slips not from your firm hold,
Though seeming friends turn false and cold,
Still in my love
I turn to the heart that's ever true,
And know I still may trust in you
And God above.

Darling, I long so to abide
Forever through life by your side,
If it could be ;
Sometimes it seems so very long,
The gladness dies from out my song,
I long for thee.

And by the grave of the dear old year
I pause with many a happy tear
For days of peace,

And pray the coming one may be
As kind and merciful to me,
And murmurs cease.

And when the bells ring out in time
The old year's death, the new year's chime,
Each silvery tone
Shall bear a prayer of earnestness
That God will keep, and love, and bless
My darling one.

Blended Colors.

SHADES of gray are blending
Into the crimson light
Of the sunset hue of eventide
That ushers in the night ;
Colors of gold and crimson,
But we do not heed the gray,
Till, lo ! it alone remaineth,
While the brightness died away.

And, watching, I sit and wonder
If it may not be
Like unto life clouds blending
Ever for you and me ;
Crimson, and gold, and gray,
Blended as God deems best,
Commingled ever and aye,
Until the night of rest.

The crimson light of morning
  Faded at our noon,
With the gray remaining ever
  And the gold light gone so soon ;
And yet there are golden dashes
  Ever across life's sky,
And crimson jets of color
  Under the gray may lie.

But our weak heart's disappointed
  Because the gray is there,
Lose much of the richest color
  That makes our lives most fair ;
For on the darkest clouds ever
  The rainbow's hues are cast,
So maybe life's darkest shadows
  Prove brightest at the last

Oh, that our hearts could feel
  The same sweet trust
Through all the blending life clouds,
  And know that God is just ;

E'en through darkest cloudlets
Watch for the golden dye,
Knowing behind the sombre shade
The fairest light doth lie.

And so adown life's valley,
Or unto its dizzy height,
We shall watch the mystic shadows
Of the gold and crimson light ;
And across to the bright shore yonder
Our bark shall sail some day,
Into crimson and gold forever,
But never a shade of gray.

Little and Much.

I HEARD a little bird singing
  Out on a bough to-day,
In the wind so chill and piercing,
  And the clouds above so gray.

But on he sang as gladsome,
  While the storm went sweeping by,
And minded not the blighting winds,
  Or watched the sullen sky.

And I thought how very little
  His brief, wee life could hold,
Scarce a crumb for his daily food,
  Braving the winter's cold.

But list ! not one note falters,
  No hush in the sweet, low song ;
He raises his head toward leaden skies
  And sings on, clear and strong.

Ah ! hearts with much of bounty,
Rich in your worldly store,
List to the roving warbler
Singing outside your door.

Was ever your song so blithesome
With the richness that you had ?
When the sunlight fell the brightest,
Was ever your heart so glad ?

If his brief life holds so little,
There's an instinct of trusting love
That falters not when summer fades
And skies frown dark above.

And oft it proves with many,
In the darkened life they live,
With the smallest crumbs of gladness,
The more of praise they give.

And hearts are oft the lightest
That sing through the piercing blast,
Trusting the sun will shine again
After the clouds have passed.

Beautiful Hands.

BEAUTIFUL hands, and what are they?
Wherein lies the wondrous beauty?
Are they the shapely, soft and white,
So perfect and fair, with touch so light,
Unfit for irksome duty?

Are beautiful hands the ones that lie
Ever most idly folded,
Adorned with golden bands so rare,
With priceless jewels resting there,
Hands most perfectly moulded?

Nay, were they white as fallen snow,
Perfect in every motion,
If they ne'er helped another in need,
Offered to do no kindly deed,
In vain their fair proportion.

Beautiful hands ! Ah ! gladly I say
That there are very many,
Be they brown as a berry, or white and fair,
Helping some one their burdens to bear,
Most beautiful hands of any.

Soiled, perchance, with weary toil,
Helping the careworn mother ;
Willing and ready each deed to do,
Proving the heart to be kind and true,
Smoothing the path of another.

The touch of those hands are worth
Much more than those idle fingers ;
And oft when the face from life has passed,
On the folded hands we've looked the last,
The thrill of their clasp still lingers.

'Tis these beautiful hands that beckon us
On to the shores immortal ;
And when the journey of life is done,
These same dear hands, when Heaven is won,
Will lead us through the portal.

Beautiful hands, their work may have been
  Ever so toilsome and hidden,
But on that shore those hands will hold
And strike the chords of the "harp of gold,"
  Nearest the throne be bidden.

Beautiful hands! Yet mayhap a gem
  Ne'er rested upon those fingers;
But they've soothed the pain of the weary one,
And long after all their toil is done
  The blessing they brought still lingers.

To Helen.

And now to-day, as oft before,
Old Time comes knocking at your door.
Just open wide and you will see
He brings a "wreath of years" to thee—
Each year a flower, and counting on
We find they number twenty-one.
Ah hum!

Why do I sigh? I cannot tell:
Each wave of life a magic spell,
And Time is, oh! so swift in flight—
He crowns you twenty-one to-night,
And smiles as he entwines the flowers,
And thinks how fast will pass the hours.
Ah me!

And as each year this message brings
On Time's forever flitting wings,
You leave for me in bungling rhyme

To take the terror out of time,
For *I* about two months ago
Felt just like you, *exactly* so.
Ah woe!

Yet why repine? each passing year
Has brought much bliss and scarce a tear.
Can we not hope that at our feet
Another year may bring more sweet?
Then hope, my dear, as oft before,
That there are better things in store.
Ah! hope.

Then twenty-one, and now of age
To make your début on life's stage,
To rule the hearts of men—who knows?
To marry some time, I suppose,
To taste the cup of life's sweet bliss
In lovers' smiles, in love's own kiss.
Oh dear!

And now my wishes I will write
For you, so many and so bright,

That life may bring you perfect peace,
Till Time his endless flight shall cease,
And ever bring you that pure love
That outlasts earth and lives above
Forever.

And though our ways may far divide,
Borne on Time's relentless tide,
Yet still through years and parted ways
My heart will turn to these bright days,
And friendship's power I then will prove,
If not in rhyme, why then in love.
Adieu !

If I could Know.

If I could know, when life is done,
And they fold my hands for aye to rest—
If I could know those folded hands
Had even one life helped or blest,
Or strewn one flower upon the way,
My heart would be content to-day.

If I could know, when through the gate
To the "silent city" upon the hill
They bear me away, there will be a heart
To miss, and mourn, and love me still,
And sometimes come and weep o'er me,
How happy to-day my heart would be!

If I could know, on the path I trod,
Some trace of good would still be there
To strengthen another or smooth the road,
Or help some heart its burden to bear—

If only one seed of good would spring
And brightness into one life bring.

If I could know—but after all
  The true way that is left to me
Is trying to do the best I can ;
  The result may remain a mystery :
In my quiet home on the hill I'll rest
In peace, if I have done my best.

A Curious Season.

THERE is a season in each year
That draws forth many a briny tear
From every editor, I fear,
And it is Spring :
'Tis not because the air is chill,
Nor lack of cash to pay his bill,
Nor bird-notes that the air doth fill
(For birds *will* sing) ;

But it's because the tortured brain
Of many cannot bear the strain,
And long to tell the tale again
Of poet's lyre ;
And all are smitten just the same,
Each feels the grand poetic flame,
The change is only in the name,
This Spring desire.

They treat upon the balmy air
(The editor is sure to swear
And put his shears directly there
Into the theme);
And poets sigh and long to rise
And take the public by surprise
Before the fire within them dies
As doth a dream.

And that is why the spring-like balm
Finds editors so stern and calm,
And each repeats a soothing psalm
To keep up heart:
For they have learned through weary years
To dry their sympathetic tears
And pitilessly to use the shears
In every part.

And then the public learn this too,
And in the Spring look weak and blue,
And read the long effusions through
With good intent;

Feeling that like all evils then
For chastening and improving men,
These tortures of Spring-poet's pen
For good are sent.

Rose-Leaves.

CLOSE by my window my favorite roses
Have budded and blossomed, and now to my grief
The south wind comes blowing,
And no mercy showing,
Is bearing my roses away, leaf by leaf.

A few I upgather, to keep as reminders,
When rude storms are blowing, of sunny June days.
Though life not remaining,
Still its perfume retaining,
Each petal thus teaches God's wonderful ways.

For our lives, like the roses, are short in duration,

Yet we're weaving a record each day in life's thread ;
May it be of hands willing,
Life's duties fulfilling,
To be a sweet memory when we are dead.

And though when *we* die some other comes onward
To take up in life the place we did fill,
Yet the deeds we traced then
Can ne'er be erased there,
And the good we did is permanent still.

Then I gather the rose-leaves and tenderly hold them,
So much of our own lives these wee petals tell,
Of the living and dying,
The sweet comfort supplying
Of long, fadeless summer, when all will be well.

To Arlouine.

SOME tribute to-day I'll endeavor to pay
In respect to the day of your birth,
And fill up the glass while good wishes we pass
For the rest of your journey on earth.

May I offer to thee the wish that there be
Much bounty of pleasure for you,
And life's sunshine be bright until cometh night,
And the dark clouds that dim life be few.

May you gather the flowers in the fair sunny hours,
Till the chill of November shall blast ;
And then though they fade, yet the brightness they made
May linger when spring-time is past.

May Time's bells ring for aye, as they ring to-day,
Repeating for many a year,
And Time's touch be light and old age be bright
And shadowed by never a tear.

If my words be weak in attempting to speak
The fullness that lies in the heart,
We find all words vain, and to us it is plain
That we have but spoken a part.

Then let's fill up the cup, and hope while we sup
That every sweet pleasure be given,
And 'neath clouds of gray may be shining alway
The sunlight and lovelight of heaven.

A Platonic Idea.

They say our souls, as life onward rolls,
  Are ever aimlessly drifting,
A part of the whole (a rather poor soul),
  Till Fate, the veil uplifting,
We find our other half, and then
We grow to be completed men.

If this be so, I do not know,
  I sometimes almost doubt,
For there's many a soul that is never whole—
  What's the other half about?
On some life avenue or street
My other half I trust I'll meet.

But what will they do with those who go
    through
  The whole of life without mating?

And that poor lonely half (I can't help but
laugh)
Forever and ever a waiting,
Walking life's path alone, in roses and
thorns,
A poor lone maiden whom every one scorns.

But this comfort is sweet, if I don't chance
to meet
My beloved half on the road,
That half of some souls, when rude trouble
rolls,
Are braver for bearing the load
Than whole ones, depending upon a man,
For depend on such creatures who possibly
can?

Love's Question.

My dearest one, how I wonder
If you know how I want you to-night,
When the shadows grow deeper and longer,
And day is taking its flight.

Does your heart ever feel I am calling?
Not even love's ears could have heard
The whisper, and yet I am longing,
Longing for one loving word.

And yet why am I thus sighing?
My heart holds no image but thine,
And I love you so truly and fondly
That loving seems almost divine.

I have no words that can move you
Like the mystical whispers of art,
But the truest of all words, "I love you,"
Are the words that well up from my heart.

I am desolate, lonely without you—
  Can you guess of the deep, silent pain?
The only relief is the hope, love,
  I soon shall be with you again.

Dear heart, can you hear me? I want you,
  And yet all this longing is vain.
Not now, but some time, yes, some time,
  I will be with you again.

Sleeping.

UNDER the snow in quiet sleep
Beautiful flowers are lying,
While for the days when they'll awake
Our impatient hearts are sighing,
When the tiny flowers with perfumed breath
Will awake from the icy arms of death.

Under the snow they give no sign
That they will e'er awaken,
Yet though the wind blows bleak and chill
Our faith is never shaken,
For we know the sunlight's gentle touch
Will awake the flowers we love so much.

Under the snow in silent sleep
Two household blossoms lying,
And oh! for the sound of their tiny feet
Our hearts are ever sighing;

The feet that had gone such a little way
Are resting beneath the snow to-day.

Under the snow, in dreamless sleep,
  While the days and nights pass ever,
And we weep the bitter tears of grief,
  But our faith is shaken never :
He that the frailest flower doth keep
Cares for our treasures while they sleep.

Content.

I AM content that life has brought
A gift so great to me ;
A love so tender comes unsought
More than I dreamed could be.

I am content though life's bright sun
Sometimes seems clouded o'er ;
Where love is true doubts never come,
So I shall doubt no more.

I am content, God's way is best,
My lips shall not complain ;
He gives the tired flowers rest,
Refreshes them with rain.

I am content each day to feel
How great the gifts of mine ;
No mortal power from me can steal
These treasures held divine.

I am content, life's winding road
  Grows shorter every hour,
At eve lay down the weary load
  Freed from its weight and power.

At Last.

THOSE sweet hours my spirit hoped for
With such trusting and such prayer,
And what seemed to me like roses
Budding in the summer air,
They have come and have departed,
Bringing all the joy to me
Which my faith and hope had braided
In the thought—"it is to be."

Oh! that we could stay the moments
Wherein deepest life is stirred,
When the spirit ceases waiting
With the watch of hope deferred,
And the dream that danced before us
In anticipating hours
Comes with all its sweetest blessing,
And we feel that it is ours.

Then we think that earth is better,
Heaven is nearer, God is good ;
We forget the thorny places
Where our bleeding feet have stood.
Come at last, thou long-sought blessing,
Come to cheer us on our way,
And we feel that earth and heaven
Are not far apart to-day.

Vesper Bells.

When the evening shadows settle down
  And the birds have ceased their singing,
My fancy roams across the sea,
  Where the vesper bells are ringing ;
From ivied towers and ancient domes
The sweet, low music ever comes.

And weary hands have toiled all day,
  And hearts for sweet rest longing
List with joy to the evening bells
  To the twilight hour belonging ;
Such a fitting ending to the day,
When care and toil are put away.

The dreamy hour, the setting sun,
  The shadows longer growing,

The sleepy twitter of the birds,
  The tired cattle lowing,
And then the chime of silver bells
The needed rest of night foretells.

'Tis a fancy sweet at eventide,
  Sometimes I almost know
I'm in some solemn, vineclad tower,
  And see the bells swing to and fro,
And hear the music die away,
As night comes stealing after day.

Perchance at the eventide of life,
  When shadows chill and dreary
Creep o'er the sunlight of our day,
  And our hearts are pained and weary;
That the golden gates may swing ajar,
And we'll hear the vespers from afar.

From eternity's tower the vesper bells
  The end of life's day foretelling,

While the promise of rest and peace and joy
  In its mystic chimes is swelling,
And we, with heart-hopes long denied,
Shall go home at the vesper, satisfied.

After the Rain.

Up above me, so high, so free,
A bird is singing a melody,
So full of joy and birdlike praise,
Of a Father's wise and loving ways,
For the gladsome rain.

At my feet, in their brightness fair,
Flowers are blooming everywhere,
Lifting their little heads to drink
The cooling draught—nor ever shrink
From raindrops bold.

The grass-blades grown so crisp and dry
Alike give signs of their reply;
The dark green hue comes back again—
Thy cooling drops were not in vain,
Refreshing rain.

The leaves of trees, grown still and sear,
Awakened to new life appear,
And rustle as their joy they tell
Unto the wind, that loves them well,
Of friendly rain.

The whole great earth, alike combined,
In its own ways, so undefined,
Gives token of its perfect joy
In chords whose tones have no alloy
In perfect song.

Somehow our hearts awaken, too,
Their songs of gladness to renew,
With everything the wide earth o'er
Our heartfelt joyousness outpour
For timely rain.

Gleaning.

LOOKING o'er life's broad fields,
  Their shadows, and wondrous sheen,
At the toilers at their work,
  How glorious a thing to glean !
And yet the gleaners tire,
  Repine at their duty plain,
And wish for them had been
  The reaping of sheaves of grain.

Lo ! the sowers have come,
  Sowing the wondrous seed ;
Lo ! the evil one
  Cometh with many a weed ;
Then the good reapers, too,
  Gather the golden grain,
Perhaps for many of us
  The gleanings may remain.

'Tis not so simple a task,
Glorious be it indeed,
If from out life's way
We gather e'en one good seed ;
For in many a nook
Hidden by tares may lie
Tender germs of good
That may ripen by and by.

Do not faint or repine,
They that gathered sheaves
Did a grand life's work,
Neither need we bring leaves ;
For in all the days,
Yea, all the years to come,
There will be plenty for us
To save and gather home.

If we watch all along the way,
Nor miss a single grain,
Our weak, frail hands may prove
A balm for care and pain ;

Remembering through each day
The least of deeds is seen,
And God may richly bless
Those who only glean.

Thanksgiving, 1881.

THANKSGIVING DAY of an eventful year
So full of pain and sorrow, care and fear,
And dark, cloud-shadowed days;
Full of the power and greatness of our King,
Full of His love, that every day doth bring,
And of His marvellous ways.

Thanksgiving Day, a day for prayer and praise,
Prayer for His guidance through the future ways,
And praise for blessings past;
Praise for the Hand that ever leads us on,
Nor e'er forgets the weakest, frailest one,
But shelters from the blast.

Upon this day, e'en but a year ago,
How little of the future did we know,
How little could have guessed!

Many that joined us then in happy song,
Loved ones, for whom our yearning hearts so long,
Have been called to their rest.

An empty chair to-day in many a home
Waiting, prepared for one that ne'er will come,
And hearts so full of pain :
Bright homes made desolate by fire and flood,
Hands bearing the stain of human blood,
Come as a sad refrain.

And yet across life's-seething, angry waves,
Over our sorrows, o'er our loved ones' graves,
Thanksgiving anthems steal ;
And hushed with one accord all hearts grow still,
Feeling that all has been His blessed will,
And in submission kneel.

Those laid at rest need no regret to-day ;
More those who still are travelling the way
That feel the pain ;
Grim doubt and fear ne'er enter on that shore
Where our beloved shall sing forevermore
The glad, triumphant strain.

Dream not over memories so sad and dim,
Devote this day, as it should be, to Him
"From whom all blessings come,"
That should we live another year to see,
Our lives may purer, better, worthier be
For our eternal home.

A day of praise, full of the heart's own songs,
Gladly to Him, to whom all praise belongs,
Our yearly offering bring ;
No strain of bitterness to enter in,
No rude chord of doubt or care or sin,
Pure be the songs we sing.

Rest.

A LITTLE word, yet full of promise great,
For whose fulfilment every heart will wait,
And sure to come, early be it or late,
This longed-for rest.

Naught but needs its soothing, quiet power,
The heart that waits through many a weary hour,
The blithesome bird, yea e'en the tiniest flower
Feels need of rest.

The night's repose that follows after day,
When for a time all care is put away,
And we receive that boon for which we pray,
Refreshing, restful sleep.

At morn the burden seemeth light to bear;
Refreshed, the earth appeareth e'en more fair;

The path looks smoother just beyond us there,
After a little rest.

As when the lamp of life shall cease to burn,
Unto that promise how our hearts will turn,
For its sweet blessing how our hearts will yearn,
God's perfect, dreamless rest!

In perfect trust to fold our hands and say,
The Lord has led us through life's changeful way,
So shall He lead us at the close of day
Into His courts of rest.

A Glimpse.

I CAUGHT a glimpse of Spring to-day,
It came in the slyest, stillest way,
It came in a breath of warm, sweet air,
It came in the sunshine everywhere,
This little, sunny glimpse.

A bluebird sat and trilled its lay,
And I knew the sunny, springlike day
Made it happy, with hopes maybe
Soon the buds and flowers to see,
I knew by its happy song.

The clouds looked softer and lighter too,
Fold on fold, 'gainst the sky of blue,
Soft and tender, as half afraid
And ashamed of the shadows that they made,
Hiding the beautiful sky.

And peering forth from its dreary bed
A pure, fair snowdrop raised its head ;

The wind blew light as it swept above,
And seemed to touch it in tender love,
The sweet, pure flower.

This was only a glimpse, but it made me glad ;
With the bright spring-coming can one be sad?
Soon the hill, the valley, and wood
With sweet wild flowers, as a living flood,
Will be bedecked and strewn.

The glad, bright Spring and Easter-tide
Cometh unto us side by side
One with the hope of transient joy,
The other with promise naught can destroy,
The promise of endless Spring.

As we welcome the blossoms waking to life,
When we've done with earthly care and strife,
So our souls shall awaken to life complete,
Just as the flowers that spring at our feet
Awaken to transient beauty.

A Winter Rain.

OLD, dreary rain, with ceaseless tread,
With frowning, shifting clouds o'erhead,
What brings you here?
But yester e'en the skies were bright,
And flecked with golden clouds of light,
So soft and clear.

And now the sky is overcast,
Dark, dull clouds go scudding past
Above my head;
While dripping, dripping from the eaves,
The raindrops fall, the wind, too, grieves
For brightness fled.

Thou'rt not like Summer's gladsome rain,
That dances 'gainst the window-pane
In merry glee;
That keeps in time with birds and air,
Refreshing, gladdening everywhere,
'Tis not like thee.

Thy steady, ceaseless, sober tread,
From which all joyous sound is fled,
Is sad to hear ;
The branches dripping, brown and bare,
And swayed in gestures of despair
(Or so appear).

No little flowers await caress,
The cold earth's winter barrenness
Is all you find ;
If you would wait Spring's bud and bloom,
Then with a joyous song will come,
It would be kind.

Come with the birds and sunshine, too,
When the sleeping flowers in need of you
To life have crept ;
And, nodding, answer to thy call,
Where gladsome brightness covers all,
Where thou hast wept.

We Cannot Tell.

We cannot tell as the days go by
Where the brightest moments of life may
lie ;
We cannot tell till the day is passed
How deep the shadow that night will cast ;
We cannot tell, for unable are we
To solve life's simplest mystery.

We cannot tell but a soul of grace
May adorn the humblest dwelling-place,
Or those embittered by sin unfold
'Neath palace walls adorned with gold ;
We cannot tell, for our human eyes
See but that which on the surface lies.

We cannot tell by the calm, fair sea,
How great its depth or its treachery,
How many a hideous crime will hide

When its rippling waves the smoothest glide,
We cannot tell, for its depth unknown
Is fathomed ever by God alone.

We cannot tell but the joyous smile
Be but a mockery all the while,
Beneath may be a heart in pride
Is seeking by smiles its pain to hide,
And eyes that seem the brightest may be
Looking through shadows most drearily.

We cannot tell, and 'tis better so
Each heart its joys or griefs to know,
For the One alone who can sympathize
Judges all things with righteous eyes,
And depths of all hearts or fathomless sea
To Him alone is no mystery.

After.

AFTER life's morning hearts grow tired
And feet grow slow;
After life's noon we long for rest,
Sweet rest to know.

After a drought we pray for rain
And feel our need;
After we stray far from the fold,
Pray Christ to lead.

After life's work is nearly done,
Looking back we find
Many a cloud that darkly frowned
Was silver-lined.

After from off life's cup of wine
We sip the froth,

To drink the dregs that still remain
Our hearts are loath.

After long years of waiting here
For seeds we've sown,
When we most need the blessed fruit
To us is shown.

After bright days have passed away
For gathering sheaves,
Upon the trees of wasted time
Are only leaves.

After youthful days have fled
Ne'er to return,
The blessed pleasures that it brought
Too late we learn.

After life, its toil and pain,
Comes dreamless sleep,
Never to wake to earth again
And, waking, weep.

After that night, what comes at morn
We cannot tell ;
But for the faithful ones who sleep
We know 'tis well.

To W. W. S.

To-day Time's bells are a ringing
The knell of a year that is past,
While over the threshold already
The future year's shadow is cast.

Do you turn from its beckoning finger
That bids you follow it on,
To dream o'er the year departed,
Or sigh for the days that are gone?

There are days out there in the future
How many? our hearts cannot ken,
But as bright, if we will believe it,
As any the days that have been.

Our lives are not measured by moments,
By days or months or by years,

We are young in age if we will it,
Or old in our youth with our tears.

If we gather the morning's fair blossoms
As treasures, to keep them in store,
We shall never lack sunshine or brightness
When youth and its pleasures are o'er.

And memory holds beautiful treasures
That awake in their sweetness to-day,
Kept locked in the heart's secret chamber,
That yield not to time or decay.

May life's sun grow brighter and fairer
As Summer gives place unto shade,
And the beacon of faith grow the nearer
As all of earth's brightness shall fade.

For the crimson light of life's even
Hath a more blessed promise than morn,
For from out of its weird, dusky shadows
The dear light of Heaven is born.

Then may many a happy returning
With all fairest treasures be blessed,
Till you shall awake in the morning
From out of life's cares, into rest.

An Epistle

TO A NEWLY MARRIED AUNT.

YOU asked me to write a poem, I think ;
The honor I feel, I am sure,
But the power to comply,
The harder I try
Seems harder still to procure.

Were it on a death my pen would be swift ;
On a birth I am *sure* to do better ;
But on nothing at all,
With ideas so small,
Inspiration is bound by a fetter.

On wisdom of love my wit I would prove,
For love is a poet's ideal,
But that theme I don't dare,
For I am aware
That *loving* to you is quite real.

So my wishes I'll give, as long as you live,
The best that my heart can command,
May the sunlight of love
Forever improve,
And friendship and pleasure expand.

May your past be bright from morn till night,
And if ever the sky be o'ercast
Remember there lies
Underneath fairer skies,
To view when the shadow is past.

And it's ever my wish, in Dame Fortune's dish,
Wherein she doth mingle life's wine,
Be the bitter drops few
That are given to you,
And the sweetest of sweetness be thine.

Then good-night, dearest aunt, I am sitting aslant

Of a chair, and position is pain ;
Farewell for a season,
On gaining my reason
You shall hear from Jerusha again.

The Wind.

Across the fields, through bush and tree,
The wind comes softly blowing,
With a rustle of leaves at its near approach,
As a mighty river flowing,
And over the flowers it stops in play,
As it rushes past on its endless way.

Methinks the wind is a harpist wild,
Whose music never ceases,
Whose notes are low or louder grow
As its mighty speed increases;
It has never stopped since the world began,
But through all ages plays for man.

Through summer hours, in dreamy haze,
Its notes grow mild and lighter,
Its touch on the leaves of giant trees
Is soft as the sun shines brighter,

But it changes chords with changing skies,
With storm all sound of sweetness dies.

We cannot tell from whence it comes,
  Nor yet to where it goeth,
But like the waves of a mystic stream
  Its music forever floweth,
Around the world through every clime,
In tune with the steady steps of Time.

Nor will it stop until that day
  To whose morn there is no even,
When all earth's music shall die away,
  And we list to music of heaven ;
When our souls shall enter the "Gates of
    Peace,"
Then the wondrous chords of the wind will
    cease.

Phantom Chasers.

UPON life's way, through every day,
Where'er the feet of mortals stray,
You'll find a phantom chaser;
Each some loved object of their own,
Within each heart a lofty throne,
Where they intend to place her.

And many are the phantoms fair
With men pursuing everywhere,
By many names we know them;
Fortune and Fame they most pursue,
And lo! their lovers are not few,
Though many range below them.

Sweet Pleasure has her lovers bold,
Who at her feet lay priceless gold
If she a smile will deign;

And oft she mocks their eager prayer,
And takes from them the little share
Of light that did remain.

Dark Envy enters many a heart,
And bitter is the pain and smart
Her evil counsels bring ;
What little sunlight Pleasure gave
E'en Fame or Fortune cannot save,
Through her it all takes wing.

She aye points out some fairer place,
Some one who has a fairer face,
Some hand filled with more gold ;
And then all pleasure seems to sway,
The sweet, bright sunshine fades away,
And hearts grow hard and cold.

While fickle Fortune beckons some
Farther and farther still to come
Upon the treacherous ring,
Then vanishes with mocking laugh,
And leaves the weary one to quaff
The bitterness 'twill bring.

And Fame is scarce a kindlier one,
For many a heart when life is done
Gaze from the lofty height,
Finding that all they sought was vain,
Unworthy of the toil and pain,
Leaving them only night.

Yet on the phantom chasers go,
If all is vain, then be it so,
They have no time to think;
Bitter or sweet the draught they hold,
If it be mixed in cups of gold,
How eagerly they drink!

And all the quiet, peaceful rest
By which a pure, true life is blessed,
To their worn life unknown;
They turn them to the restful shade
When marsh lights of the phantom fade,
And reap what they have sown.

The New Year's Promise.

As we stand upon the threshold
  Of another mystic year,
Peering out into the future,
  Filled with wonder, almost fear,
Knowing not what it be holding
  In its future days to be,
While methinks it seems to beckon
  Us to seek its mystery :

Thinking of the days of shadow,
  Days of sunshine and of rain—
For no life, however happy,
  But must have its hours of pain—
Far down through the distant ages
  Comes this sweet promise free
To all His children, "As thy day
  So thy strength shall be."

With this promise need we fear
To tread the future ways,
To watch for sunlight or for clouds
Through all the unknown days?
Knowing that if dark clouds arise
And threatening skies we see,
Yet God has said, that as our day
So our strength should be.

Strength if the sunshine comes to us,
To not grow proud or vain;
Strength if sharp sorrow scourge our hearts,
To bravely bear the pain;
Strength to take up the New Year's work
With willing hearts in trust,
Feeling that He who guides us e'er
Is wise, and true, and just.

Strength to grow better if we will
Through these brief days to come;
Strength when life's dream shall vanished be
And God will call us home;

Strength as we need, no more, no less,
No surplus of our own,
But granted daily from His hand
Who leaves us not alone.

The future holds no bitter cup
But we have strength to drink,
It beckons to no path so rough
From which our feet should shrink,
For looking up in faith and trust
Catch many a glimpse of heaven,
Finding for every day we live
The needed strength is given.

Now.

Let us gather our flowers as they bloom on our way,
Let us store up the sunbeams from every bright day,
Let us speak the kind works our heart prompts us to say,
Ne'er wait for the mystic to-morrow ;
For the flowers may fade ere we find them again,
And the sunshine be followed by cold, dreary rain,
And the kind words too late be spoken in vain,
And our lives be clouded in sorrow.

Let us help with kind words the toil-worn one,
Let us do now our work while it's time to be done ;

Let us stretch helping hands to the weary and lone,
Now, when they most need it ;
For in vain are words when hearts cease to beat,
In vain the fair blossoms laid at their feet,
In vain all our love that might have been sweet,
When too late for them to heed it.

Let us praise God now for blessings to-day,
Praise Him for the sunlight that floods our way,
Nor forget when the sunshine is bright, to pray
For strength when its light is clouded ;
And the beautiful flowers we gathered at morn
Will brighten our hearts and help to adorn
Our lives when the shadows of night are born,
And life may by autumn be shrouded.

Only for to-day be all our care,
Be it clouded with shadows or bright and
fair,
We have nothing to do with the future day
there,
Holding its pleasure or sorrow.
Day by day let our duties be done,
Weaving life's mystic threads one by one,
With a full life ended at setting sun,
And the dawn of a blessed to-morrow.

Spring.

SPRING has come, go feel its breezes,
Watch how fast your nose turns blue ;
Though the zephyrs give you sneezes,
"Gentle Spring" is something new.

Spring has come, go count the freckles
Pasted fast upon your nose ;
Don't complain, those are the kisses
Of the first spring wind that blows.

In the yards the grass is springing,
One green blade I found in mine ;
Little snowflakes fell upon it,
And they broke its tender spine.

Spring has come, the frogs are croaking,
And as each hoarse strain I hear
How I wish they had a shawl on,
And some cotton in their ear.

Spring has come, wee birds are singing
Melodies so soft and sweet,
But they look so awful chilly,
Trying to protect their feet.

Spring has come, and peace departed
Out from many a home I ween ;
Men, with visions of cold luncheons,
Even now look pale and lean.

But it's spring, "ethereal mildness,"
Soft-trained poets love to sing,
And among the mighty army
I, too, welcome thee, O Spring !

No Time.

THERE'S no time to dream along our way,
For the future to-morrow will not be to-day,
And sands from life's hour-glass passing away
Leave us no time to dream in.

No time for complaining how heavy the load,
For plainly before us there lieth the road,
And complaint helps not to an easier mode
Than the way that is assigned us.

No time to censure the rest of mankind,
Within our own garden a plenty we'll find
Of weeds to uproot, if we will but mind
Our own especial duties.

No time for angry contentions or strife,
They are rude discords that mar a life,
And serve as a merciless, pitiless knife,
To cut bright bands asunder.

No time for doubting or fear can there be,
Or to try to unravel life's deep mystery,
Across the measureless, fathomless sea
We shall no longer be doubting.

There is time only our whole work to do,
Proving ourselves to be faithful and true,
Be the clouds many or be the flowers few,
Flowers and sunshine are coming.

Time? Ah me! ere the setting of sun,
Could the good deeds be many and faithfully done,
The cross be well borne, the bright crown won,
How blessed a life to be living!

If.

If we would only try to be
From care and sorrow ever free,
  And never look before us,
Nor ever scan the sky of life
For clouds mayhap of care and strife,
  Or fear they hover o'er us:

If we could ever feel content
That shadows too by God are sent
  As well as sunshine ever,
That bitter mingles with the sweet,
Making in all this work complete,
  Yet He forsaketh never:

If we would not e'er watching be
For ships to come across the sea
  Laden with richest blessing—
The gifts of God which, day by day,
Are scattered all along life's way
  Are better for possessing:

If we could catch the crimson light
At eve, that tells a morrow bright,
  Nor dream of any raining—
We'd find some pleasure every day,
Make others happy on life's way,
  And not be e'er complaining.

If we would only think it so,
Life would not be so hard below,
  And we more fit for heaven ;
To use the talents we possess,
To make all happier, not less
  Be thankful they are given.

A human life can't be all bright,
Each day is followed by the night,
  But after night the morning.
The shadows that o'er each must fall
Are needful shadings after all,
  The best of life's adorning.

Our Best Gifts.

How apt we are to take God's gifts,
The best of gifts He has given,
And fold them close to our selfish hearts,
With no thought of the Giver or heaven,
Blindly trusting our strength alone,
Calling them vainly all our own!

How we hold them close at even's shade,
No thought of parting or sorrow,
And awake, alas! with aching heart
And empty arms on the morrow,
Finding that earthly love was vain,
And the Father taketh His own again.

Then we feel how weak we were to hold,
How vain our own self-trust,

And plans for the future, with tear-dimmed
eye,
We watch as they crumble to dust,
For the trust we need and strength so sweet
Are only found at the mercy-seat.

For alone by Him who has stricken us
Can the wounded heart be healed,
And the promise of meeting our lost again
By the dear Christ's blood is sealed,
And the cross though heavy He helps to bear,
And points on the way to meet them there.

He may bid us wait, for life's work yet
Remaineth still unfinished,
And in soothing the pain of another's grief
We find our own sorrow diminished,
For the way is plain, the path is straight,
And we must labor as well as wait.

And so at last, with our work all done,
None of life's duties neglected,

We shall listen with joy at close of day
For the summons so long expected,
When the gates of eternity open wide,
And we find our loved on the other side.

A Robin's Song.

THIS is what a robin sang,
Sang and swayed in the sunlight there,
While all the earth seemed full of song
And everything looked wondrous fair :

" I am happy as I can be"
(And who could doubt it, dear red-breast),
" My gentle mate and birdlings three
Are safely sheltered in yonder nest.

" The fairest home one e'en could wish,
My little life seems all complete,
Full of light and love and peace,
And life and love are sweet, are sweet.

" I am as rich as I can be
Where the sunlight gleams through budding trees,
My home is flooded with golden light,
Rocked and swayed by every breeze."

Ah ! dear old robin, sing on, sing on,
While light and life are left to thee ;
I can catch a glimpse of your bonny home
Softly nestled in yonder tree.

Yet, happy bird, I still well know
A change will come to thy gladsome breast ;
Thy little birdlings full soon will grow
Too large to keep within the nest.

And thy desolate home, no longer bright,
Will cease to be a home to thee,
And budding trees and fairest light
Dark and shadowed will seem to be.

But like are human hearts, my bird,
Sing on, sing on, while life's complete,
Sing while the world is full of light,
For life and hope are very sweet.

Another Year.

ACROSS the snow-clad earth there comes
A glint of moonlight stealing ;
The clock strikes out the midnight hour
From many a dome and stately tower,
Another year revealing.

Another year of life's swift course
Has fled ; the last stroke dying
Resounds far off on the frosty air,
As though, perchance, it was some prayer,
Some mystic spirit sighing.

Farewell, old year, our hearts awake
Beneath the echo's tone ;
We count thy blessings o'er and o'er,
Knowing that thou wilt come no more,
Thou past and fleeting one.

How fast, how very fast it fled,
The twelve months rolled away!
The glad spring buds, the summer-tide,
The flowers and fruit of autumn pride,
Have yielded to decay.

Each heart reviews its own records,
Recalls the light or shade,
The pain or pleasure that it brought,
The lessons all its days have taught,
The changes it has made.

I doubt me not most hearts will yearn
Its ways to travel o'er,
And shrink from taking up the maze
Of future work and future days
That stretches on before.

But this is doubting; let the year
Begin with trusting heart,
We'll see more clear the sunny hours,
More sweet and fair will seem the flowers,
Nor doubt when they depart.

Ah! be the Christmas carol then
  Chanted the bright year round,
Not sung by tongue or wrote by pen,
But wrought in deeds; "Good will to men"
  "And peace on earth" abound.

Grains of Sand.

SOME think the little things of life
  Are only grains and bubbles,
And think no pain or sorrow comes
  From little joys or troubles ;
But they who will e'er stop awhile
And all life's workings measure
  Will find these little grains of sand
  Are what God uses to expand,
And make our cares or pleasure.

'Tis not the mighty waves that dash
  Against the rock with power
That wear within their surface smooth
  Some fissure every hour ;
'Tis but the wavelets, baby waves,
That kiss the rocks in impish glee,
  Whose constant pressure day by day
  Soon wear the solid crags away
So grandly and so silently.

And could we gaze into the cup
Brimming with all life's pleasure,
We'd find there many little things
That help fill up the measure :
A grain of love, a kindly word,
E'en little smiles of gladness,
The tiny flower we drop each day
So thoughtlessly upon the way,
Bring joy to hearts or sadness.

Great men are those who do not stop
At one great worthy action ;
On life's broad field so full of work
One deed is but a fraction,
But ever still with courage firm
And heart-love undiminished,
Working with willing brain and hand,
Filling each hour with golden sand,
Till their rich work is finished.

November.

CHILL and gray are the clouds to-day,
And bleak the wind that's blowing ;
We turn our eyes from the dreary sight
To where the coals are glowing,
And we liken the ashes covering o'er
And blackening many an ember
To the leaden skies and smouldering light
Of the dreary month November.

The wind low grieves as it stirs the leaves
That into mounds are drifting,
And trees are waving branches bare,
Through which the snow is sifting ;
The snowflakes fall so soft and light,
The barren earth caressing,
And sunset rays light up the sky
As with a parting blessing.

We turn our eyes where we know lies
  Bright Summer's fairest treasures,
Sweet flowers so fair are covered there,
  Gone with our bygone pleasures—
Past, but we know, though not the same,
  Flowers will bloom in the spring-time
    coming,
Just as another day will break
  After the evening's gloaming.

Hark ! the wind tears through the pines,
  Or moans so low and broken,
The bitter-sweets and trailing vines
  Cling close to their shelters oaken ;
While on and on, perchance in hopes
  Some trace of Summer finding,
With rippling song, so hushed and still,
  The merry brook is winding.

'Tis for a space the birds have fled,
  For a little the flowers are hidden,
Till, as a waft of a magical wand,
  They from concealment be bidden ;

And branches that now look brown and dead
Shall be robed in bright green fairness ;
When the fair mantle of earth is spread
We shall forget its bareness.

For the years they come and speedily go,
While we pause to count them over,
And our flower of hope and treasure of love
The ashes of time will cover ;
But they, like the flowers we mourn to-day,
Will bloom in the spring-tide coming,
When we pass through November's gloom
To the day that hath no gloaming.

Birthday Greeting.

As wee flowers grow bold
And their petals unfold
When the sunlight comes stealing that way,
Best of wishes will start
From the warm, friendly heart,
On the happy return of this day.

And the wishes will be
That your life may be free
From clouds that o'er life's sky are drifting,
And fade ere they're born
As the sunlight of morn
With gold light night's shadows is lifting.

And yet well we know,
Though we wish it not so,
Life must have both its clouds and its even,

Its care and its pain,
Its fair skies and rain,
To the brightest of lives must be given.

And the flowers by the way
May last but a day
Or fade ere the wane of life's morning ;
Let each beautiful flower,
Though it last but an hour,
Some drear path in life be adorning.

Be there many bright days
And flower-strewn ways,
And smooth be the path you are treading ;
Though clouds drift above,
May the sunlight of love
Its constant radiance be shedding.

For life's morning is brief,
And eternity's reef
We must gain at the shadow of even ;

May bright crimson and gold
Your life's sunset enfold,
And be crowned with the brightness of heaven.

Then bright be thy way
And fair be thy day,
With many returns of the season;
If I'm lacking in words,
This comfort affords,
'Tis fault of the muse is the reason.

Air Castles.

DREAMS must come to every mortal,
Idle pastimes though they seem,
Filled with vague and curious fancies,
Still we know they're "but a dream:"
Long for riches, fame or honor,
For a life filled full of bliss,
Life unmarred by tiresome duties,
Oh! so different from this.

And we think how very happy
If from out our tired hands,
All these "tiresome duties" taken,
We could dwell in fairy lands,
Where the hands are ever idle,
Softest beds are made of flowers,
Where "Old Time" in ceasless vigil
Does not stand to count the hours.

Discontented, oh! how many,
Reaching out for something more,
Gain the prize, to find it leave them
E'en more lonely than before:
Fretful hearts in constant searching,
Chasing phantoms through life's way,
All unmindful of the blessings
Coming to us day by day.

Leaving little acts of kindness
For some shining, distant goal,
Wishing for great names, distinction,
All unmindful of the soul;
Caring not for others' sorrow,
Pain our hearts might help to soothe,
Paths to other feet so thorny,
Gentle words might surely smooth.

Dreams are only mists and phantoms,
Fading all so quick away;
Life is made of little duties,
Little duties day by day:

Dreams can bring no wealth of harvest,
"Only leaves" the reapers find;
Life's work done as God has planned it
Leaves a monument behind.

A Bright Side.

THERE are beautiful chords in every heart
Some word may yet awaken,
And drops of sweet in every cup
Await to be partaken ;
There are beautiful lines in the plainest face,
If we would try to find them,
And golden bands 'neath darkest clouds
Where the sunlight rays have lined them.

There are restful paths along life's road
To weary feet a blessing,
And sunbeams peering the darkest nook,
Some hidden flower caressing ;
There are always calms on the roughest sea
And a shore to every ocean,
The bitter and sweet are e'er combined,
With each an equal portion.

Beauties are seen in every day,
In the sunlight or the shading,
And million stars adorn the night
When the brighter light is fading ;
And there's never a heart so hard or old
But hath some memory tender,
And never a life so worthless grown
But might some service render.

On the oldest wood green mosses cling
And grow in softest lightness ;
'Neath crooked vines and withered leaves
Red berries hide their brightness ;
The fairest flowers so often spring
From most uncouth surroundings,
And most refreshing draughts are made
From bitterest compoundings.

'Tis only eyes that will not see
That lose the greatest beauty ;
'Tis hands that shrink from plainer tasks
That never do their duty ;

And hearts that ever most complain
Will show the least compassion,
And never do a kindly deed
Unless it is "the fashion."

And just such lives are never missed,
No trace is left behind them,
They always sought the darkest side,
And darkness was assigned them;
And when death calls them to their rest
(Be I the thought forgiven),
I sometimes think on the other shore
They'll still find fault with heaven.

Unknown.

OUT from the dusty highway,
In many a lone retreat,
Grows oft the blue-eyed violet,
Raising its head so sweet ;
With the sun alone to see it,
Yet living its life complete.

In many a rocky cervice,
Where human eyes ne'er view,
Some rare, sweet flower is growing,
Bathed with light and dew,
Adorning its dull, bare rock walls
With tendrils bright in hue.

And yet who will e'en venture
To say they grew in vain,
Nurtured by God's fair sunlight,
And freshened by His rain,

Making the dark earth brighter
Where the flowerets fair have lain.

Like also many a quiet life,
Brightening some darksome way,
With tender faith and perfect love
Taught e'er so silently,
Giving hope to the faithless one,
In the trust their lives display.

Their work is not less worthy,
Though the world may never know,
For the flower on the pathless mountain
Is as fair as those below,
Their mission just as precious,
For God has willed it so.

Perchance the world may never
Know the great good we do,
And many pass unheeding
Souls so great and true,
But in the home eternal
They will find God knew.

Where the willing hands so faithful
Shall find their work not vain,
The silent ones that murmured not
Will never more feel pain,
Trusting hearts shall find their own
To never part again.

At Eventide.

THE thoughts that come at eventide
  Are best of all the day,
When all the little vexing cares
  We gladly put away,
And watch the sun with crimson breast,
And goodly promise of coming rest.

We think o'er all we've done that day
  Since rising of the sun,
And many a kindly deed we find
  Our hands have left undone ;
Yet we form better plans for coming days
As the sun sends forth its good-night rays.

And we watch the fading of the light
  Of another day that's past ;
Each setting sun with steady step
  Brings us closer to the last,

When the flickering life sun fades from sight,
And we bid the world a last good-night.

Sweet comfort comes with silent tread
  At beautiful eventide,
For dark clouds that hung low overhead
  Now range up side by side,
And catching the light like a glad reply,
Lose their own dark gloom in crimson dye.

And so it may be when life's bright sun
  Creeps slowly to the west,
That the clouds that hung so low at noon
  Prove only for the best;
And through the gloom their shadows cast
We learn to catch God's truth at last.

And though we find at life's sunset
  Many a deed undone,
Many a hungry heart whose love
  A little care had won,
Yet with our failings all confessed,
In faith we wait the promised rest.

And if each day through fleeting life
  Is filled as best we may,
We shall look with joy to the setting sun
  At close of busy day,
And o'er our tired hearts will come
A blessed rest when life is done.

Longfellow.

As we recall some sweet old rhyme
Often sung in the long-gone time,
And whose echoes bring us many a strain
Of brightness ne'er to come again,
Thus time shall never cease to bring
Loved songs that were unfit to sing.

As we look long on some faded flower
That holds for us some subtle power,
Not for its beauty, but the touch
Of hands that we have loved so much,
Made it immortal, and we shrine
The faded flower as half divine :

As we touch ofttimes in awe and love
A harp's dumb strings no more to move,

And think of the fingers that used to stray
Across its chords in a mystic way,
We shut our eyes and seem to hear
The olden music sweet and clear.

Thus it is with the poet dead,
Forgetfulness can never spread
Its mantle o'er his sweet, loved songs,
Or hide the fame that to him belongs,
For some sweet word of his will hide
Within our hearts and long abide.

The harp he touched with magic strain
Never will gladden our hearts again,
No other hands can the chords awake,
Nor fingers have the power to make
The music that the hands, now still,
Brought forth, in rhythm, at his will.

The beautiful song-flowers he made
Never in all time's reign will fade,

Ever fresh with some beauty new
Upon life's way their fragrance strew,
For the motionless hands have a life work
wrought,
Of which perchance the heart ne'er thought

Waiting.

We are waiting, waiting,
Our own hearts scarcely know
For what the eager waiting,
In the days that come and go.

Waiting for something better
In some distant day to see,
Or, perchance, for untold sorrows
That may never be.

Waiting in the morning
For the restful shade of night.
Waiting in the evening
For the morrow's light.

Waiting for the future
To unfold unto our view,
Paths our feet will follow,
Duties we shall do.

In vain all our striving
To catch the faintest ray
Of light from the mystic future,
Or glimpse of the coming day.

So we keep waiting, waiting,
With hearts in patient beats,
Losing ofttimes in sighing
Much of the present sweets.

For to hearts long waiting
There may never be
Anything as blissful sweet
As the future mystery.

And yet we turn so wistful,
With eager, longing eyes,
To the veiled road before us,
Wherein our pathway lies.

And hearts oft disappointed
Turn back with bitter tears

To the past misspent in waiting
For sorrow-laden years.

Yet we ne'er will learn the lesson,
Though told oft o'er and o'er,
To live within the present,
Nor strive to look before.

Until on our longing vision
The light of heaven shall break,
Souls will not cease their waiting,
Or tired hearts cease to ache.

To a Friend.

WITH fleetest wings and flying feet,
"Old Time" ceaseless roving,
Comes to-day with a wreath of years,
His constant flitting proving;
For oh! a year is as a dream,
So fast we glide adown life's stream.

A wreath of years he brings to thee,
And onward ever flying,
He pauses not to heed your tears,
Nor careth he for sighing;
Still ever on until it be
His flight end in Eternity.

A wreath of years, and do you dread
This token of life's adorning?
There are roses, oh! so fresh and fair,
He brought you in life's morning;
So back apace your memory steals,
And all that morning's beauty feels.

Forty-six times he has come to you,
Each time a new flower weaving,
Blossoms so fair, some rich and rare,
Some stained by tears of grieving;
A fitting tribute to us all,
For lives must fade and flowers must fall.

And ere you lay the wreath aside,
As you count the blossoms over,
Hidden beneath how many thorns
The rose-like petals cover!
Yet after years of trust you find
The hand that gave the thorns was kind.

Already the flowers are giving signs
Of Autumn's withering finger,
And over the buds of summer-tide
Your heart will fondly linger;
For every heart so often grieves
At the certain coming of autumn leaves.

May it be each year when Time shall come,
An added year in weaving,

That he may bring you more of joy
And less of care and grieving,
That the sky of life may grow more bright
As day creeps closer unto night.

So when the record of life is closed,
And the last sweet cloud is riven,
We may gladly lay down the wreath of years
For a fadeless crown in heaven,
Knowing that those who patiently bear
Are fitted a nobler crown to wear.

What I Saw.

'Twas an evening in June,
And a bright silver moon
  Hung boldly out in the sky,
While mosquitoes had come,
And beginning to hum,
  With beetles beginning to fly.

The parks were well lit,
For the town had seen fit
  A gala day to have given,
And the lanterns below,
As they swung to and fro,
  Sought to rival the lanterns of heaven.

A lass fair and tall
Like sunflowers in fall,
  From all of the rest claimed attention ;

And a young man was there
With this girl tall and fair,
I nigh had forgotten to mention.

They walked, oh ! so slow,
Scarcely seeming to go,
Their glances bewitchingly tender ;
Though much shorter than she,
He in strength seemed to be
A most brave and loving defender.

The moon looking down,
Cast aside every frown,
And grinned in merriest glee ;
While the stars seemed to strive
Nearer earth to arrive,
This wonderful couple to see.

The " June bugs," amazed,
Were utterly dazed,
And folded their beautiful wings,
While the light zephyrs sigh
As the breeze passes by,
Forgetful of all other things.

A gazer in despair
Was bold to declare
  She resembled a kitten most sick,
And leaned nearer her beau,
As said kitten, you know,
  Might lean toward a heated brick.

As they passed from my sight
Out into the night,
  And the romantic vision there died,
I noticed a toad
As he sat by the road
  Looked longingly after and sighed.

The Reason.

It is not the April sunshine, love,
Nor May with its blossoms rare,
That fills my heart with sweet, sweet peace,
And leaves such brightness there;
'Tis the sunshine of life
And flowers of love
That make life seem so fair.

The sunlight of April fades, love,
Sweet flowers of May must die,
And away from the chilling autumn wind
The singing birds will fly;
But trust never wanes,
And hope singeth on,
And love has a changeless sky.

What though dark shadows fall, love,
Where fair, bright sunlight shone,

They cannot dim the eye of faith
Or drive us from our own,
And souls long wedded,
Whate'er may come,
Can never be alone.

Forever, love, and my lips meet thine
To seal again the pledged vow,
Forever love's bright sun shall shine
Just as it shineth now,
And the touch of time,
While love is mine,
Falls lightly on my brow.

Christmas Eve.

OVER the hills a chastened shimmer
Of crystal light, a softened glimmer
Of moonbeams fair,
On the snow-clad earth caressing,
Like a symbol of God's blessing
Resting there.

Into hearts, soft rays are falling,
Blessed, holy thoughts forth calling,
Christmas even ;
For our lives grow strangely brighter,
Proof of love to make hearts lighter,
Love of heaven.

Many lives and hearts nigh breaking
On this blessed night awaking
To God's care ;

Stronger hands their own are holding,
Loving arms are them enfolding,
Rest is there.

And upon the glorious morrow
They awake to joy, for sorrow
All has flown;
For to us a Son is given,
Opening up the gates of heaven
To His own.

And to mourning ones the story
Is not simply of God's glory
To us given,
But the Christmas tale forever
Of a life where friends ne'er sever,
Life in heaven.

Blessed night! sweet strains are stealing,
While about the throne are kneeling
Angel bands,
"Peace on earth," God's will forever
For His mercy now and ever
Firmly stands.

What Does it Matter?

WHAT does it matter if my life
Be as a changeless, dreary way?
What does it matter if my work
Still be repeated every day?
What can it matter after all
If the way be hard or the path be bright,
If I have finished my duties all
Complete at night?

What does it matter if my flowers
Wither and fade e'en at their bloom,
And brightest hopes so soon are laid
Crushed and blighted within the tomb?
What will it matter if I catch
Some ray of light God may yet send,
And keep my heart patient and light
Unto the end?

What does it matter if the path
  Seems ever so hard and long,
And other ways stretch out so fair
  For those who seem more strong?
Ere the ending it yet may be
  The path may broaden smooth and wide,
And sweet flowers bloom no more to fade
    On every side.

What does it matter? life at best
  Is only a wearisome way,
And hearts grow tired and long for rest
  At almost every day;
Yet with sweet hope and faith
  We shall not miss the flowers or light,
And glorious will our life-work be
    Complete at night.

To Emma.

As Time goes hurrying ever on,
Bringing us years, each one by one,
A custom, dear and olden,
Of offering some friendly cheer,
Good wishes for the coming year,
Comes as the sunlight golden.

Then as he comes to you to-day
With another year of life's sweet May,
The custom I remember,
And wish you joy through all the days,
Through all life's strange, unfathomed ways,
Through May and chill December.

May sunlight fall with brightest rays
On every path, o'er roughest ways,
And if its light be clouded,

Remember darkness will not last,
'Tis for a while the sky is o'ercast,
For a little the sun is shrouded ;

And if the May-time of life is best,
We pause awhile in its light and rest,
It will make us all the stronger—
Stronger to tread where the way grows steep,
Stronger to bear when the shadows are deep,
When the winding path grows longer.

And I drink to you with best of cheer,
May the future be a bright, fair year,
May best of blessings be given ;
With many and many a happy return,
Till the "lamp of life," when it ceases to burn,
Be exchanged for the light of heaven.

That is All.

THERE is just a whisper of Autumn
Throughout the beautiful land,
The leaves of the trees confessing
The touch of a painter's hand,
Bright-hued leaves, and is that all?
Flowers that fade and leaves that fall.

There has been an abundant harvest,
A great and bountiful yield,
The golden sheaves are all garnered,
Gathered from out the field—
Fruit and sheaves come every fall,
An abundant harvest; is that all?

Yet no! methinks there are whispers
That come with the sheaves of grain,
In through the leaves bright tinted,
That tell of Autumn again,

The soft wind sighs of a conquest great,
And the triumph of those who work and wait.

When the bright-hued leaves are dying,
The winds blow bleak and strong,
Throbbing throughout all nature
Cometh the victor's song,
And we on life's great battle-field
Wait for the fruits it will yet yield.

The golden-rod in the meadows
Nods its gay gilded plume,
With its bright-hued asters opening
In all their richest bloom ;
'Tis God's own symbol in Nature's rhyme
That tells our reward at harvest-time.

Different Ways.

Life's great, broad path divides so oft
Into so many ways;
For every life some verging road
That changes with the days.

All have some separate path to tread,
Duties for them alone,
E'en the sunshine fair or bird's sweet song,
For each a different tone.

Ah! the path divides so oft, I ween,
And loving ones must part,
To tread the dark, diverging ways,
But hope still cheers the heart.

The countless paths make only one,
Life's different works combine,
And the golden threads will after all
Make only one design.

We lose for a time the claspéd hand
We held in other days,
But we shall hold the same again
When we reach the broader ways.

And Faith's sweet song along the way
Is that we all shall meet
In the broad, smooth road that ne'er divides
And leads to the golden street.

Do We Forget?

Do we forget in chill November days,
When clouds hang low and skies are dark,
The sweet spring buds, the summer's warmth,
The dew-bent roses, and the singing lark?
Do we forget all these and shivering say,
For winter's gloom there is no sunlight ray?

Do we not rather keep in memory still
The bright, fair flowers, the summer's fervid glow,
And almost hear the music of the birds
That left us but a few short weeks ago,
Until by the sweet spell of memory's charm,
E'en in November days our hearts grow warm?

Do we forget when life creeps surely on
To its November days with dark, dull skies,
The golden light, or sweeter flower-strewn way
That just a little way behind us lies?

Because the past calls these bright days its own,
Has all the memory of their brightness flown?

Ah! bright life days, past ever from our way,
And beauteous flowers we never more shall see,
Forgetfulness its pall can never lay
Upon the memory that we hold of thee;
And blessed be the brightness, reaching down
Unto the valley which dread shadows crown.

Who can forget? Although the flowers are gone,
And dear loved faces long ago were hid,
Time may assuage the pain, but memory dear
Keeps ever fair the face 'neath coffin-lid,
While hope points yonder to the setting sun,
And whispers ever of our waiting one.

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